



Weekly Crop & Weather Roundup



Cooperating with the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture
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Week Ending April 12, 2009

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Fair week for Field Work: It seems that winter was still lingering in the second week of April. Frost and snow flurries were reported throughout central Pennsylvania last week slowing field work to just 3 days with suitable conditions. Principal farm activities included spreading manure, fertilizer and lime, trimming fruit trees, as well as planting oats, tobacco in beds, and mixed grasses. Farmers also attended auctions, and conducted post harvest activities such as equipment maintenance, building repairs, and preparing for the growing season. The weather did not seem to stop spring plowing, as plowing is now 30 percent complete.

PA Topsoil Moisture for Week Ending April 12, 2009

Very Short	Short	Adequate	Surplus
Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
1	10	78	11

Crops: Wheat remains in good shape at this point. Wheat conditions are 0% very poor, 3% poor, 33% fair, 49% good, and 15% excellent. Oat planting continues powerfully despite the few days suitable for field work. They are now 27% planted. This is compared to last year's 24%, and the five year average of 23%. Oats have begun to emerge; as 7% of the oats are now beginning to surface. Tobacco progress continues sturdily, as 39% of the state's tobacco is planted into beds. This is compared with the average of 7%. Alfalfa crop conditions look good and are 1% very poor, 5% poor, 35% fair, 49% good, and 10% excellent. Timothy clover crop conditions are also doing well and are 0% very poor, 3% poor, 31% fair, 60% good, and 6% excellent. Fruit trees are starting to show signs of life, as peaches are now 9% in pink, compared to last year's 14%, and the average of 30%. The cherry and apple trees however are not progressing as fast.

Livestock: Farmers are putting cattle out to pasture because of the lack of food reserves in some areas. This, along with the cold and rainy weather is leading to the continuing decline of pasture conditions. The overall pasture conditions are as follows, 5% very poor, 15% poor, 32% fair, 43% good, and 5% excellent.

U.S. as of April 5, 2009: Heavy rain drenched the lower Southeast, curtailing fieldwork and triggering widespread flooding. In stark contrast, extremely dry conditions

persisted across Deep South Texas and much of Florida's peninsula. Farther north, a procession of storms maintained unsettled, showery conditions across the Northeast and Midwest. In the latter region, cool, damp soils delayed the start of spring fieldwork operations. Meanwhile on the Plains, the same series of storms produced additional snow, especially in the Dakotas and Nebraska, but largely bypassed southern areas. Flooding persisted in parts of the north-central U.S., while concerns for winter wheat on the southern Plains shifted from the effects of the March 26-28 winter storm to the potential impact of the cold weather that followed. Freezes affected areas as far south as northern Texas on March 29, 31, and April 2-3, with temperatures in the range of 20 to 25 degrees F on the last day of March. Another surge of very cold air affected the central and southern Plains from April 5-7. Elsewhere, mild, dry weather promoted fieldwork and crop development in California and the Desert Southwest, while cool, showery conditions prevailed across the remainder of the West. Weekly temperatures averaged at least 4 degrees F above normal across southern Florida and much of the Northeast, but ranged from 4 to 12 degrees F below normal across the northern Plains, the central High Plains, and the West, excluding California and the Desert Southwest.

Winter Wheat: Nationwide, 43 percent of the 2009 crop was rated in good to excellent condition, down slightly from a year ago and the week ending November 23, 2008, the last available rating for the current crop. In Kansas, 5 percent of the wheat crop show signs of severe freeze damage while 10 percent show moderate to severe wind damage. Heading was evident in fields in Texas and Arkansas.

Small Grains: Across the United States, producers had seeded 32 percent of this year's oat acreage. Texas producers were finished planting and heading was evident in half of the fields. Planting progress was 2 weeks ahead of last year and 10 days ahead of the 5-year average in Ohio. Nebraska producers had 21 percent of their crop in the ground, slightly behind last year and 11 points below the 5-year average. Planting had yet to begin in the Dakotas, Minnesota, and Wisconsin.

Weather Data For Week Ending April 12, 2009

Station	Last Week Weather Summary						April 1 - April 12, 2009					
	Temperature				Precipitation		Precipitation			GDD Base 50F		Base 40F
	High	Low	Average	DFN	Total	Days	Total	DFN	Days	Total	DFN	Total
Northwest												
Erie	53	29	39	-5	0.27	3	1.23	-0.05	6	14	14	58
Franklin	63	26	40	-5	0.30	4	1.56	0.19	7	1	1	43
Meadville	58	26	38	-5	0.47	5	1.70	0.38	9	5	5	43
Mercer	60	26	40	-5	0.19	2	1.28	-0.12	7	3	3	44
Springboro	57	25	37	-8	0.64	4	1.92	0.72	7	3	1	34
Warren	63	25	39	-4	0.48	4	1.96	0.59	8	0	0	41
North Central												
Bradford Region	58	22	37	-4	0.30	4	1.39	0.07	7	6	6	39
Oswayo	62	18	37	-6	0.44	4	1.35	0.15	8	0	0	28
Kane	61	21	36	-4	0.27	3	1.59	0.15	7	0	0	19
Laporte	59	25	38	-6	0.64	5	2.45	1.20	8	0	-4	33
Lock Haven	69	26	43	-3	0.34	3	1.16	-0.04	6	7	3	68
Port Allegany	60	21	38	-4	0.34	4	1.29	0.09	8	0	0	33
Renovo	68	25	42	-4	0.53	2	1.51	0.31	5	6	2	65
Ridgway	64	21	37	-4	0.41	4	1.59	0.27	7	0	0	26
Stevenson Dam	66	23	39	-3	0.41	3	1.26	-0.06	5	4	4	48
Towanda	63	24	40	-4	0.44	3	1.43	0.35	6	4	0	51
Wellsboro	61	24	38	-3	0.47	3	1.41	0.55	6	0	0	28
Williamsport	67	26	46	-2	0.39	3	1.96	0.71	6	28	17	108
Northeast												
Hawley	60	22	39	-4	0.45	4	1.31	0.02	6	4	4	43
Wilkes-Barre/Sc	63	26	44	-3	0.29	4	0.82	-0.29	6	20	16	90
Susquehanna	57	26	40	-2	0.44	2	1.33	-0.08	5	3	3	42
West Central												
Butler	62	25	40	-6	0.69	4	1.61	0.36	8	0	-5	43
New Castle	65	26	41	-4	0.49	4	1.15	-0.05	7	2	2	47
Slippery Rock	62	25	41	-3	0.45	4	1.49	0.23	7	1	1	45
Central												
Altoona/Blair	66	27	44	-4	0.13	3	0.70	-0.56	6	16	5	81
DuBois	61	24	40	-4	0.70	4	2.14	0.82	8	16	16	56
Lewistown	67	28	44	-4	0.52	4	2.10	1.01	7	10	-5	79
Middletown	67	32	49	-2	0.33	4	1.39	0.19	7	29	10	124
Prince Gallitzi	65	22	41	-4	0.52	4	1.34	-0.34	7	1	1	41
Selinsgrove	67	26	43	-4	0.27	4	1.34	0.14	7	9	-1	71
State College	66	30	43	-3	0.27	4	0.94	-0.21	7	7	3	68
East Central												
Allentown-Bethel	65	27	45	-3	0.31	4	1.43	0.11	7	26	15	103
Lehighton	63	26	42	-5	0.14	1	1.08	-0.12	3	9	1	73
Matamoras	59	23	40	-6	0.40	4	1.41	-0.10	7	4	-1	51
Mt_Pocono	60	25	39	-2	0.24	4	2.09	0.55	7	6	6	46
Southwest												
Pittsburgh/Alle	64	29	45	-3	0.25	5	1.47	0.27	9	31	19	104
Indiana_PA	63	27	43	-4	0.06	2	0.40	-1.04	4	18	7	70
Myersdale	68	22	39	-7	0.65	5	1.51	-0.05	8	0	-3	29
Mount Pleasant	67	22	43	-1	0.52	5	1.19	-0.41	9	9	9	73
Pittsburgh Intl	63	29	45	-3	0.25	5	1.00	-0.29	9	32	19	104
Connellsville	67	25	44	-4	0.50	6	1.32	-0.15	9	4	-10	77
Waynesburg	66	24	43	-4	0.37	6	1.34	-0.02	9	3	-6	66
South Central												
Biglerville	67	30	47	-3	0.63	5	1.77	0.45	9	16	-3	99
Everett	61	22	40	-7	0.55	6	1.57	0.28	9	0	-7	29
Hanover	65	30	47	-3	0.79	4	1.65	0.33	8	23	4	109
Harrisburg_AP	68	31	49	-2	0.40	4	1.66	0.46	8	32	13	128
South Mountain	62	26	43	-5	0.87	5	2.06	0.80	8	3	-6	64
York	66	29	47	-3	0.51	3	1.25	-0.18	7	29	10	115
Southeast												
Green Lane	65	29	46	-2	0.76	5	2.13	0.73	8	19	10	99
Hamburg	67	28	46	0	0.26	4	1.82	0.39	7	20	17	100
West_Chester	68	26	46	-4	0.94	3	2.14	0.68	6	20	2	93
Lancaster	64	29	47	-2	0.46	3	1.96	0.64	6	24	11	107
Neshaminy Falls	65	27	44	-4	1.15	3	2.16	0.60	5	22	10	100
New Holland	67	29	47	-2	0.75	3	1.73	0.41	6	20	7	102
Philadelphia	70	37	50	1	0.84	4	1.67	0.23	7	47	24	150
Philadelphia NE	67	32	48	-3	0.87	4	1.58	0.14	7	34	11	128
Reading	66	29	47	0	0.43	4	1.34	-0.10	7	33	25	119
Sellersville	64	26	44	-4	0.75	4	2.03	0.63	7	18	9	92
Willow Grove	65	31	47	-1	1.03	4	4.21	2.65	6	30	18	118

DFN = Departure from normal (using 1961-90 normals period).

Precipitation (rainfall or melted snow or ice) and pan evaporation in inches.

Precipitation days = days with precipitation of .01 inch or more.

Air temperatures in degrees fahrenheit.

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Internet Reporters Comments, By County:

Reporters are from Extension Service (Ext), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Farm Service Agency (FSA), Conservation District (CD), farmers, commodity specialists, or other knowledgeable individuals.

ADAMS COUNTY, Judy A Behney (FSA) - Adams County had another cold week. On Wednesday, we had 1/4 inch of snow throughout most of the county. Field conditions at the beginning of the week were still wet, but windy days have dried the ground. Fruit trees are still being pruned. Some of the plum and apricot trees are blooming.

ADAMS COUNTY, Lee Showalter - The fruit crop continues its slow advance into the blossom period. It continues to look like bloom will be a couple of days behind normal. There is no reported damage at this time.

BEAVER COUNTY, Jon Laughner (EXT) - We had 2' of snow on the ground the first 3 days of last week. Some rain then followed. There were also cool temps with chilly winds.

BRADFORD COUNTY, Kelly E. Sundy (FSA) - Some lime and fertilizer was applied this past week. The county received rain a few days last week. Fields are muddy, with very windy conditions. Temperatures are lower than normal for this time of year.

BUCKS COUNTY, Michael Fournier (EXT) - The off and on rain kept most field work to a minimum. What started out as an early spring has turned into a long winter.

CAMBRIA COUNTY, Dolly Little (FSA) - It was quite the mixture of weather conditions last week. Activities included spring plowing, planting oats, and hauling manure.

CLARION COUNTY, Thomas Tanner (FSA) - Many farmers are chopping at the bit to plant oats and new seedings. It appears planting will have to wait a few more days due to the wet ground. Some farmers are building and mending fences. Some spreading of manure is going on. The winter was very hard on fall planted seedings.

CLEARFIELD COUNTY, William R. Clouser - The wet weather early in the week has yielded to very good field conditions; however, temperatures have been somewhat cooler than normal for the time of year. Manure hauling activities have begun again and I expect spring tillage to begin in earnest.

CRAWFORD COUNTY, Ron McCorkle (NRCS) - Snow and cold weather this week put a halt to most field activity. The melting snow and rain saturated the fields making Crawford County muddy. Saturday was a good auction day to spend time socializing.

FRANKLIN COUNTY, Thomas Kerr - The weather is still cool and damp. Field work is still limited to the high shale ground. Fruit buds are swelling but not yet ready to bloom. Pastures are greening but still very slow in growth. More rain would be a benefit.

LANCASTER COUNTY, Burrell Whitworth Jr. (NRCS) - Preparing for spring planting continued to dominate the activities last week. Some grazing has started, and with the wet conditions pastures are getting beat-up. There was good growth on rye.

LANCASTER COUNTY, Jeffrey Graybill (EXT) - I have seen several fields of onions being planted. Cover crops are beginning to be burned down in preparation for corn planting.

LYCOMING COUNTY, Michael Sherman (FSA) - Pastures are greening nicely. Cattle are in the pastures for feeding due to the short supply of feed.

POTTER COUNTY, Bill Waltman (EXT) - Only a few strips of winter cover crops have been disked under at this point. Only a few forsythia have bloomed at this point. Some pastures are becoming more active.

SNYDER COUNTY, William C. Sheaffer - There were on and off showers during the past week that have relieved the shortage of rainfall for the time being. With the high winds and showers, there were few field activities undertaken.

SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY, Kelly E. Sundy (FSA) - Susquehanna County received rain for a few days, and fields are muddy. Windy conditions plague the county. Temperatures are colder than normal.

WESTMORELAND COUNTY, John Lohr (FSA) - It was a wet week with very little field work progress. Some early-planted oats and alfalfa are emerging. Grass is just beginning to show some growth. We had several inches of snow on the grassy areas on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings.

PA Crop Progress for Week Ending April 12, 2009

Crop	Current Week	Last Year	5-Year Average
	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Spring plowing	30	20	28
Oats, planted	27	24	23
Oats, emerged	7	0	0
Tobacco beds, planted	39	0	7
Peaches, in pink	9	14	30

PA Crop Condition for Week Ending April 12, 2009

Crop	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Wheat	0	3	33	49	15
Alfalfa and alfalfa mixtures stand	1	5	35	49	10
Timothy clover stand	0	3	31	60	6
Pasture	5	15	32	43	5

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